

Stephen F. Austin State University

SFA ScholarWorks

Electronic Theses and Dissertations

5-2017

Everything is a Box

Javier F. Vega

Stephen F. Austin State University, vegajf@jacks.sfasu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.sfasu.edu/etds>



Part of the [Arts and Humanities Commons](#)

[Tell us](#) how this article helped you.

Repository Citation

Vega, Javier F., "Everything is a Box" (2017). *Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. 99.
<https://scholarworks.sfasu.edu/etds/99>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by SFA ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of SFA ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact cdsscholarworks@sfasu.edu.

Everything is a Box

Creative Commons License



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 4.0 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/).

EVERYTHING IS A BOX

By

JAVIER FRANCO VEGA, Bachelor of Art

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

Stephen F. Austin State University

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements

For the Degree of

Master of Fine Arts

STEPHEN F AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY

May, 2017

EVERYTHING IS A BOX

By

JAVIER FRANCO VEGA, Bachelor of Art

APPROVED:

Linda Post, Thesis Director

Neal Cox, Committee Member

Dr. William Nieberding, Committee Member

Dr. Walter Trikosko, Committee Member

Richard Berry, D.M.A.
Dean of the Graduate School

ABSTRACT

Everything is a Box is a body of work composed of media sculptures that thematically explore how my exposure to mass media in the form of television, film, video games and technology influence my studio practice. *Everything is a Box* presents the audience with works made through the lens of an artist raised in the United States during the late 1990s.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	i
LIST OF FIGURES	iii
INTRODUCTION	1
WORKING METHOD	3
MEDIA AND SOUND	6
PERCEPTION AND NOISE	13
TECHNOLOGY	19
CONCLUSION	21
IMAGES	22
BIBLIOGRAPHY	38
VITA	39

LIST OF FIGURES

Nam June Paik, <i>Electronic Superhighway: Continental U.S., Alaska, Hawaii</i>	6
Nam June Paik, Still from <i>Global Groove</i>	8
Donald Judd, <i>Untitled</i>	12
Yayoi Kusama, <i>Infinity Mirrored Room - Filled with the Brilliance of Life</i>	13
<i>One Step Forward</i> , Installation view, Audio/Video Sculpture	22
Detail of <i>One Step Forward</i> , Audio/Video Sculpture (1)	23
Detail of <i>One Step Forward</i> , Audio/Video Sculpture (2)	23
Still from <i>One Step Forward</i> , Audio/Video Sculpture (1)	24
Still from <i>One Step Forward</i> , Audio/Video Sculpture (2)	24
Still from <i>One Step Forward</i> , Audio/Video Sculpture (3)	25
Still from <i>One Step Forward</i> , Audio/Video Sculpture (4)	25
Still from <i>One Step Forward</i> , Audio/Video Sculpture (5)	26
Still from <i>One Step Forward</i> , Audio/Video Sculpture (6)	26
<i>12 Volts</i> , Installation view, Interactive Sound Sculpture (1)	27
Detail of Speaker Enclosure in <i>12 Volts</i>	28
<i>12 Volts</i> , Installation view, Interactive Sound Sculpture (2)	29
<i>Still from 12 Volts instructional video</i> , Interactive Sound Sculpture	30

<i>56Kbps³, Sound Sculpture</i>	30
<i>Window to the Soul, Installation View, Interactive Sound Sculpture</i>	31
<i>Detail of Window to the Soul, Interactive Sound Sculpture</i>	31
<i>Still from Window to the Soul instructional video, Interactive Sound Sculpture</i>	32
<i>Noise in Technicolor, Installation view, Audio/Video Sculpture (1)</i>	32
<i>Noise in Technicolor, Installation view, Audio/Video Sculpture (2)</i>	33
<i>Still from Noise in Technicolor, Audio/Video Sculpture (1)</i>	34
<i>Still from Noise in Technicolor, Audio/Video Sculpture (2)</i>	34
<i>Still from Noise in Technicolor, Audio/Video Sculpture (3)</i>	35
<i>Still from Noise in Technicolor, Audio/Video Sculpture (4)</i>	35
<i>Still from Noise in Technicolor, Audio/Video Sculpture (5)</i>	36
<i>Still from Noise in Technicolor, Audio/Video Sculpture (6)</i>	36
<i>Artist Statement for Everything is a Box</i>	37

INTRODUCTION

I remember when I was a child life was filled with flashing television screens, advertisements, books, and video game controllers. The noisy, developed suburbia that is Southern California was my home for the first decade of my existence. That culture had a great impact on my perspective on life. *Everything is a Box* was produced as a group of media sculptures inspired by my experiences growing up as a child of the 1990s and being raised in a time of rapid media consumption. It is a reflection on the presence of media in our everyday lives. At birth, I was destined for a childhood of restricted physical activity due to a congenital heart defect. This led me to a life indoors exposed to technology and information, science, video games and fantasy worlds. This was the norm for me as a child in the early '90s.

Technological developments of the '90s, most importantly the rapid growth of the Internet as communication technology, inspire my work. As someone who grew up alongside the groundbreaking developments of the late '90s the presence of media is commonplace and part of my everyday environment. I am making art through the lens of an artist who has not known life without a television set, has always had a telephone connection available, and saw the Internet reach households in 1998. My experiences give *Everything is a Box* a

personal perspective of the era. I am a product of my time.

This constant exposure to media, whether it be television, Internet or social media has become a norm in American life. The advent of the development of the smartphone and its preceding communication technologies marks another influence on my work. The software of these devices has shaped how I interact with, produce, talk about, and consume media and art. Lev Manovich describes the software with which we interact through our devices as the “interface to our imagination and the world – a universal language through which the world speaks, and a universal engine on which the world runs.” (Manovich 80) My work explores these interactions that are familiar to us.

Media culture, oversaturation, overexposure, Internet culture, noise and distortion along with the technology that embodies these themes are explored in *Everything is a Box*. I produce works that reflect on these themes using the familiar language and imagery of the media culture and technology of the late '90s.

WORKING METHOD

In making the work for *Everything is a Box* my goal was to produce thought provoking and experiential work. My artistic approach is one that embraces the use of multimedia. If the piece calls for it I create objects and welcome explorative techniques and materials I may be unfamiliar with.

Most of my time in the studio is spent tinkering and reacting, playing and exploring. Pulling apart a radio or finding strange electric sounds with induction coil microphones, playing with light sources or circuits; this time spent exploring leads me to ideas and themes for my work. I believe that this sense of curiosity and play stems from my time as a child spent interacting with an immersive game or reading through a science book finding topics that would pique my interest. At times I approach the work in a goal-oriented manner hoping to find a means to an end, a specific result of trial and error. But mostly I find that I am best inspired by flights of curiosity. Finding out something about the material I am working with, or establishing a process I enjoy following what eventually leads me to the moment when the metaphorical light bulb clicks on.

A perfect instance of this occurred while exploring induction coil microphones which would lead me to produce *12 Volts* and *Window to the Soul*. After receiving my microphones in the mail I was eager to explore what different electrical

sounds I could find in my environment. I placed the microphones on every nearby electric source I could find: my computer screen, a wall outlet, a AA-battery and so on until I decided to try placing them on a power strip with multiple power supplies attached to it. As I neared the microphone to one power supply I observed that the electrical noise was very high-pitched but as I neared the microphone to an adjacent power supply the electrical noise that it gave off was very low-pitched by comparison. I thought this to be a very interesting observation but I was not fascinated until I made the realization that both power supplies shared the common characteristic of having an output voltage of 12 volts. I scrounged up every power supply in my studio and some from friends that I could find that had shared the same 12 volt output voltage.

Upon gathering these supplies I set out to hear what different noises I could discover from their electrical guts. While tinkering with these components and making observations I decided to place them in an order according to pitch with power supplies that produced lower-pitched noise on the left of the power strip and the ones that produced higher-pitched noise on the right. After moving my microphone across all of the power supplies I realized that what I had produced was not unlike a piano or even a synthesizer and thus came the idea that I could make my own instrument for my audience to play with and the fundamental ideas for *12 Volts* were established.

For *Window to the Soul* I took a different approach to the idea of moving the microphone across an object to produce sound. I wanted my audience to

produce their own sound by moving an object of their own in front of an induction coil microphone without them knowing what was present behind the mirrored panel. The clear contender for this electrical noise-producing object was a smartphone as many people carry these electrical objects in their pockets. Anybody with a smartphone could participate in this sonic exploration.

Video games especially have been highly influential for me although I did not realize it until recently. The act of playing, immersing oneself in virtual, constructed worlds, as well as learning about the characters and stories in these worlds is crucial to my work and process. The ritual of participation required by video games is crucial to and resurfaces in several of my works such as *12 Volts* and *Window to the Soul* and to a lesser extent *56Kbps*³. I seek to have my audience participate and interact with my work.

The exploring and *playing* that I do in the studio reflects my longstanding interest in learning. I ask myself a question regarding an artistic problem I wish to address like, “how can I best incorporate sound to evoke a theme?” Then I form a conjecture on that question, “I think that if I use a sound that resembles a heartbeat I can instill anxiety in the audience.” Then I test the elements involved and if they do not yield satisfactory results the process begins anew with alterations, possibly a different approach or new process. There is a joy in taking the time to learn a new process or investigating a way to use a certain material as a means to an end in an artwork. I strive to reflect these experiences of discovery in my finished work.

MEDIA AND SOUND

Many of the pieces in *Everything is a Box* address media culture, often employing the use of televisions and screens. In my use of the medium of video art and in using the television, Nam June Paik (1932-2006) is a clear influence. His use of the television set, specifically the cathode ray tube (CRT) television, fascinates me.



Nam June Paik, *Electronic Superhighway: Continental U.S., Alaska, Hawaii*. Smithsonian American Art Museum. Washington D.C. paiktudios.com. Web. 4 Apr. 2017

Paik's installation, *Electronic Superhighway: Continental U.S., Alaska, Hawaii* (1995-96), is an astounding demonstration of his use of the television to address his observations of media culture. The familiar and readymade television array is strategically arranged in the shape of the map of the United States of America. Bars of neon light become the border of each state. Within those shapes a clip of media associated with each state plays on the corresponding television screens. Texas shows a constant loop of western films, Nebraska plays video of endless cornfields, and Oklahoma displays a loop of the eponymous film. Paik brings to the forefront media portrayals of various regions in America and shows us how we are exposed to these locations through the lens of television.

Paik spoke of the concept of the "global groove." The premise of this concept is that in the future artists would all have their own channels as outlets for expression and transfer of ideas. This would allow for a great connectivity and exchange of information and would allow for art to be created at a greater rate. This was predicted at a time when the Internet had not yet reached the general consumer. Although Paik was speaking strictly about television, this global community definitely exists today on the Internet and is at my fingertips. I have the ability to communicate with people from all over the globe, express ideas, and opinions and contribute to the noise of the digital age.

My audio/video sculpture *One Step Forward* takes from various techniques and concepts used by Paik. I embrace the use of television sets to display media as part of a work. Five small '90s-era portable televisions are arranged in a



Nam June Paik, Still from *Global Groove*. WNET-TV, Boston.
Boston. *medienkunstnetz.de*. Web. 19 Apr. 2017.

geometric shape on the wall. The media displayed on the televisions is an amalgamation of clips ranging from iconic speeches by the likes of Presidents Eisenhower and John F. Kennedy to Saturday morning cartoons and video game sequences. These bits of media have been cut and arranged with a strong juxtaposition of the seriousness of the content in each snippet of media. For example, a serious speech given by President John F. Kennedy regarding our advancements in space age technology and reaching the moon is undermined by the transition into an MTV advertisement depicting the Apollo 11 lunar landing with rock music and MTV logos superimposed on the American flag. These

juxtapositions are meant to reflect the contrasts in content delivered by the box that is television. At times the media content on television can be serious and somber images of great tragedy other times it can be silly and pointless advertisements or Saturday morning cartoons. In choosing some of the media I tried recalling television programming that I was exposed to while in grade school. The Kennedy and Eisenhower speeches were shown to me in the classroom as serious examples of important historical moments in both learning about American history but also about the technological advancements of those eras. The clip choices from the 90s and onward were inspired by media I was exposed to in my home environment such as MTV, cartoons, video and computer games, and media content on the web. At times I draw parallels between older media such as Eisenhower's speech and current media like footage from the 2016 United States presidential debates of Donald Trump. These parallels and juxtapositions give a small sample of how what is seen in mass media has changed to some degree over the years yet retains similarities in content in my exposure to media since the 1990s.

On a pedestal below the screens of *One Step Forward* sits an iconic bit of '90s technology that is the Nintendo 64 game console. It is a familiar object that is recognizable as a means of entertainment. This console, by design, loads a video game cartridge on a slot on the top of the console that is left exposed. I cast a game cartridge out of clear plastic resin and loaded it into the Nintendo 64 where below, within the console, an LED light strip acts as a base for the

cartridge to sit on. The result is a “light production unit” that glows and casts colored light in a cone on the wall. This light cycles through a rainbow spectrum at regular intervals bathing the three central color televisions in colored light while leaving the black and white televisions outcast on the ends of the installation unaffected. This cone of rainbow light symbolizes the wonderment a child would feel in being entranced by a television screen, whether while watching their favorite programs and films or playing their favorite video games. It is a nostalgic memory. Below the sound of the video clips plays a track of ominous audio; droning, distorted, and mechanical percussive sounds lead the steady, fading, heartbeat-like rhythm occasionally interjected by rhythmic electronic noises. The sound is meant to be unnerving but subtle. It fluctuates in and out of the sounds playing on the televisions. Beside the Nintendo 64 console lays a controller that although plugged in, is completely shattered to pieces and rendered useless. You cannot play the game anymore; you cannot change what is on the screen. It mirrors my experiences in having a slow loss of innocence through exposure to mass media. The Nintendo 64 serves as a symbol for my willing escape into fantasy worlds through active media. These moments were accessed through the box of the television and yet the box of the television also delivered images of the cold, harsh realities of life, which I could not control. The audience may either resign to viewing the media on the televisions or ignore it much like choices I faced.

I produced *12 Volts* to be played as an instrument by my audience. It fulfills

my desire for the audience to “play” and approach my work in a manner similar to my own working method in the studio. Connected to the speakers are induction coil microphones that the audience is meant to pick up and use with the central box. These microphones pick up the electric currents of 12-volt power supplies that are hidden behind the acrylic face of the central box. The different power supplies produce varying electrical signals and when the microphones are passed over different areas on the acrylic these signals are amplified through the speakers. All of the power supplies output a 12-volt current, but despite this commonality the sound they each produce is unique due to differences in their circuitry and variations of current and resistance. It is possible to produce complimenting sounds and quasi-harmonious detuned tones by using the two microphones.

Sonic exploration interests me. Approaching sound in an abstract way fueled by curiosity defines my approach to audio in the studio. At times the sounds I find in the environment clash with each other producing a situation of sonic chaos that can be unpleasant to the ear. But sometimes even a small shift in one of the sounds can change the overall aural experience into a composition that can achieve varying degrees of harmony. These small sonic interactions interest me. The objective is not to produce music like a formal instrument might, but rather to explore a kind of everyday sound that is easily overlooked in our environment.

Beside the piece on the wall an instructional video plays on a loop on an iPhone to show the audience how to interact with *12 Volts*. The iPhone serves as

a familiar interface with which the audience can obtain the necessary information on operating *12 Volts* and mimics the ease with which we are able to gain information through technology in the digital age.

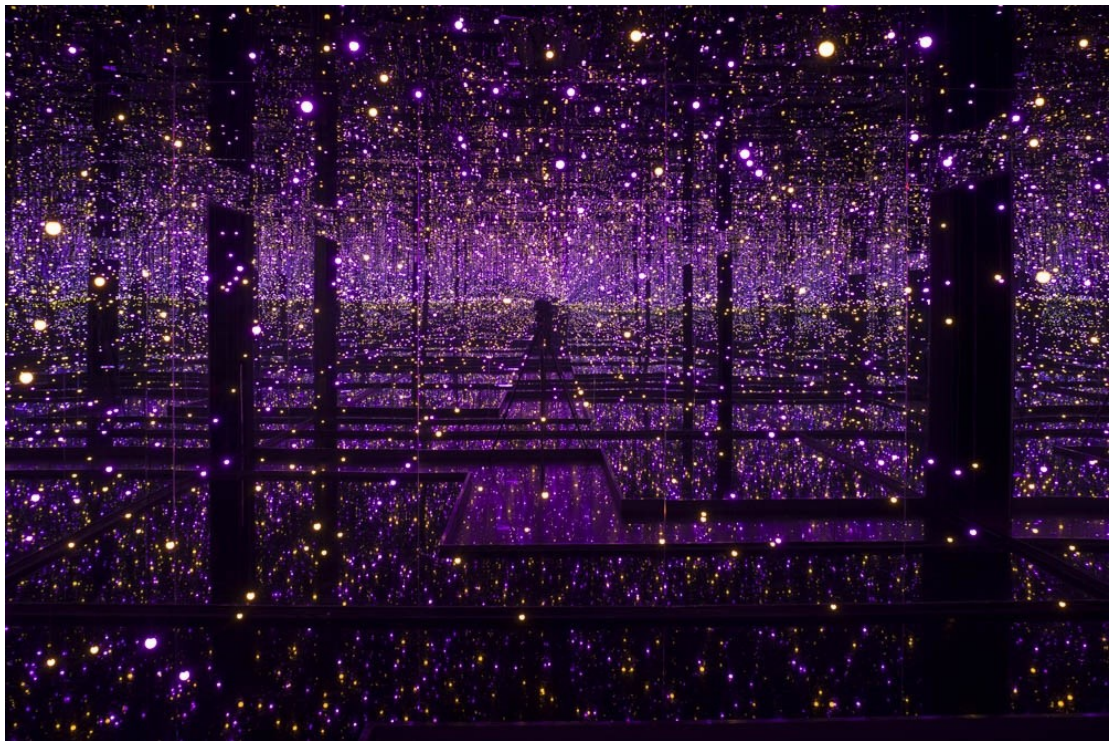
Art history classes exposed me to the work of Donald Judd (1928-1994). His use of industrial materials such as Plexiglas inspires me. The enclosures for the speaker units in *12 Volts* are made of a clear acrylic allowing the audience to see the mechanical guts of the amplifier. It echoes for the audience my experience in the studio of curiously pulling apart and tinkering with various small electronics.



Donald Judd, *Untitled*. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. juddfoundation.org. Web. 8 Apr. 2017

PERCEPTION AND NOISE

Contemporary artist Yayoi Kusama (b.1929) is known for her use of pattern and repetition, elements that pervade her extensive oeuvre of various



Yayoi Kusama, *Infinity Mirrored Room - Filled with the Brilliance of Life*.
Victoria Miro Gallery, London. Victoria-miro.co.uk. Web. 9 Apr. 2017

media. Kusama's installations and use of pattern and repetition stimulate my interest in optics and perception. Her 2011 installation, *Infinity Mirrored Room - Filled Infinity Mirrored Room - Filled with the Brilliance of Life* is a prime example of her ability to induce embodied experience in viewers. Thelen describes

embodied experience or cognition as cognition that “depends on the kinds of experiences that come from having a body with particular perceptual and motor capabilities.” (Thelen et al. 1) The audience walks into a room where every surface of the room has a mirror finish and a pool of water is placed at the end of the room. (Taylor par. 1) Suspended within the room are lights that shift between various colors. These lights become a repetitive polka dot motif that reaches infinitely into space. The audience becomes a part of this pattern as they walk into the installation, their perception being altered by the sudden thrust into seemingly infinite space.

My piece *56Kbps*³ utilizes elements I have gleaned from Kusama’s work. The use of mirrors to explore infinity is a core focus in my piece with some major differences. Kusama’s installation is on a large scale. It is a room that the audience is expected to walk into. My piece is on a much more intimate scale. I produced a cube-like vessel, 8 inches x 5 inches x 8 inches in dimension. A participant must approach and commit to experiencing by peering inside. The title *56Kbps*³ is derived from the speed of a dial-up internet connection in the late ‘90s. The laser-engraved pattern on the surface of the piece is that of a grid, a reference to mathematics, a foundation for computation. My audience is required to adjust their bodies in order to peer into the box sitting on a pedestal below eye level. Looking into the hexagonal peephole on the face of the box reveals an interior that echoes Kusama’s mirror room. The four walls, ceiling and floor of the interior are mirrored. A lone white LED blinks on, reflecting onto every surface to

create reflections receding into seemingly infinite space, and then fades to darkness on a regular interval. I have incorporated a sound element into *56Kbps*³. As one peers into the box sound can be heard coming from the pedestal. The sound is only audible when one is close enough to peer in. The audio element is a 56K dial-up tone, attempting to connect to the Internet. The dial-up tone is an iconic sound from my childhood. I remember spending time booting up my computer and having to use my dial-up modem to connect to the web. The dial-up tone became a mandatory audio element of the experience of the Internet of the '90s. My experience of the Internet is more than just visual therefore I brought this audio reference to *56Kbps*³. The tone has been processed heavily rendering it an eerie and dissonant screech. The dial-up tone sample chops in and out of audibility, as if the audio suffers from a glitch in processing and an electric white noise signal fades through the ambience and dissonance. Below the dial-up tone are the bass tones of a fading mechanical heartbeat, the only semblance of a rhythm, as the composition loops on itself indefinitely. The heartbeat sound introduces a human presence. The work addresses interaction between a person and expansive telecommunications technology such as the Internet.

Christian Marclay (b.1955) is a contemporary artist and composer known for his sonic explorations in noise, sound, sound collage, and instrument production. Marclay's work made me realize that sound and noise itself could be art. The soundscapes and aural works Marclay produces are often characterized by audio

loops, skips, choppy sound bites and repetition. A prime example of Marclay's work can be found on his 1997 album *Recordings (1981-1989)*, specifically the track *Groove*, which would later be re-released in 2013 on vinyl as a single. In *Groove*, Marclay produces a droning soundscape of layered sound and noise that, like in the rest of this album, are rendered unrecognizable with the only discernable aspect being rhythm. (Voegelin 61)

This led me to explore noise and learn of the various kinds and colors of noise. Through these explorations noise has become a recurring motif in my work both as a visual and aural aesthetic. In my pieces *One Step Forward* and *56Kbps*³ I employ the repetition and choppy sound bites found in some of Marclay's work. In *56Kbps*³ the dial-up tone has been heavily processed, leaving it an unrecognizable and dissonant screeching drone. Much like in Marclay's work the overall aural composition is abstracted and mostly unrecognizable with the exception of the rhythm. I opted for a highly structured rhythm in the distorted mechanical heartbeat-like sound whereas Marclay employs contingent rhythms in *Groove*. (Voegelin 61) The structured rhythm is familiar, it reflects our own heartbeat but its distortion is a means to set an unsettling tone. It reflects my observation that the great technological advancement that is the Internet can be a great tool but comes with its own set of dangers and responsibilities.

My piece *Noise in Technicolor* was born from this interest in the exploration of noise that came from exposure to Marclay. In my investigations I found that noise, much like light, falls within a spectrum. Visible light is composed of the

rainbow of color we know and are familiar with. The color of visible light is determined by the light's wavelength. Blue light, for example, is characterized as having a short wavelength and red light has a long wavelength. The colors of noise follow this convention where the "color" of noise is determined by a characteristic, in the case of noise it is its frequency. The analogy of naming noise as colors of light can be best explained by the example of white noise, which is named after white light, which is the presence of all visible light, thus white noise is a noise that is equal in power at all frequencies, it falls within the same power spectrum as white light. (Carter and Mancini 175) Pink noise or flicker noise is of the power spectrum $1/f$. (Witte 154) When compared to visible light of the same power spectrum it is visibly pink, hence the name. (Downey 79) So noise of the same power spectrum of visible light will determine the color of the noise (Downey) Explaining it loosely, blue noise is higher in power in higher frequencies which gives it a higher pitch and red noise has more power in lower frequencies which gives it a lower pitch with heavy bass. *Noise in Technicolor* aims to bring a small bit of attention to these scientific nuances that are present in our environment yet go mostly unnoticed.

For *Noise in Technicolor* I have accumulated a number of outdated CRT televisions that I place in a loose pyramid with larger televisions acting as a base for the smaller. Some televisions are placed on their side and all face in a direction so as to leave a semi-disorderly appearance. On the screens flicker videos, dated in appearance to match the era of the technology, addressing the

various colors of noise. I sought various instances of commonplace and real-life scenarios where different colors of noise could be found. For example, to acquire footage of white noise I filmed and recorded the operation of a 1980s FM radio being tuned aimlessly so that hints of a radio station would jut through the white noise produced.

A similar process was used for the other colors of noise. Sautéing red onions produces a high-pitched hissing violet noise, and a passing rainstorm produces pink noise, which is deeper in bass. I display these noise situations from common everyday experience or from nature, on video. Footage of rattlesnakes shaking their rattles, which produces blue noise, is appropriated from the web. These videos cycle through at regular intervals on two different televisions at a time going through red, grey, pink, white, blue, and violet noise. Every video follows a strict algorithm set out to maintain uniformity and consistency. The algorithm goes as follows: an electronically generated noise fades in from silence and a video of television static that has been tinted with corresponding color to match the color of noise being heard is then added. A tone from the dated operating system, Windows 98, plays to indicate that a new color of noise is being listened to. The television slowly fades into another video of a noise situation as described before. The electronically generated noise fades away to the sounds of the real-life noise situations I had filmed. This cycle loops for every color of noise and cycles through the six colors of noise on a constant loop.

TECHNOLOGY

The interactive Sound Sculpture *Windows to the Soul* delves into how we interact with smartphones and how they shape our everyday experience. Prompted by an instructional video on an iPhone beside the piece, the audience wakes their phones and waves them over a mirrored panel in the middle of a laser-cut wooden box. The box, which is rigged inside with an induction coil microphone, a chain of guitar pedals including a tremolo pedal, phaser pedal, chorus pedal, and echo pedal, picks up the sounds of the electrical currents and radio antenna within the phone and processes them before playing them through an amplifier within the box. This distorted and processed sound evokes a science fiction space age sound. Like the circuitry involved in the power supplies of *12Volts* every phone produces its own unique electrical noises due to differences in current therefore every audience member is able to produce their own unique sound.

Conceptually, *Window to the Soul* plays on the idea that Nam June Paik presented with his Global Groove coupled with my observation of the entrancement that people seem to have with their smartphones. Often I walk through public spaces and notice more passersby walking with necks craned over, faces gazing deeply upon their smartphones. I have been guilty of this

myself. I realized how much we tend to live on these devices, how attached we have become to being constantly connected to a grand stream of information, be it fruitful or not. People place bits of their lives on them, whether its posting their thoughts or photographs on social media or sending an e-mail or text message to distant loved ones, and as such, they become extensions of themselves. The mirrored panel in the middle of the work is engraved with the shape of an iPhone with text on its screen that reads, "Swipe to Unlock" a play on the same now outdated phrase that appeared on iPhones. In swiping their phone screens the user unlocks the sounds of the guts of their devices. The surface of the box is laser engraved and painted in a pattern inspired by television snow to remind us that the use of all of these technologies can be summed up by the idea of noise.

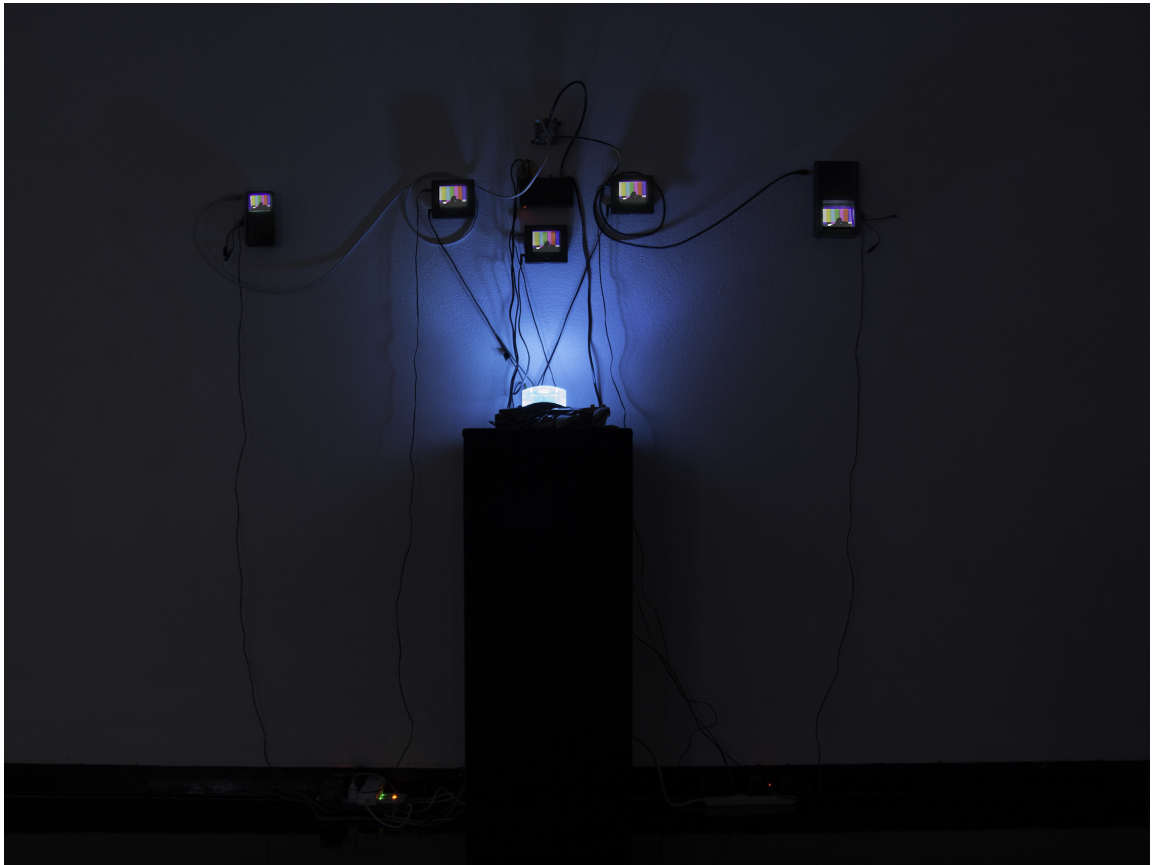
Window to the Soul and *56Kbps*³ conceptually deal with telecommunications technology, it's development since the late 1990s, and how it has impacted my everyday experience. This exposure lead me to a curiosity about technology, how it works and how I could interact with it. This is a strong contributing factor to my interest in tinkering with technology in the studio. These advancements in telecommunications led to the media culture of today, an era when information, media content, and communication are at our fingertips at all times. Media is a near constant presence in my environment and has been since I can remember. It is a part of my norm and I believe this is not uncommon in the digital culture of today.

CONCLUSION

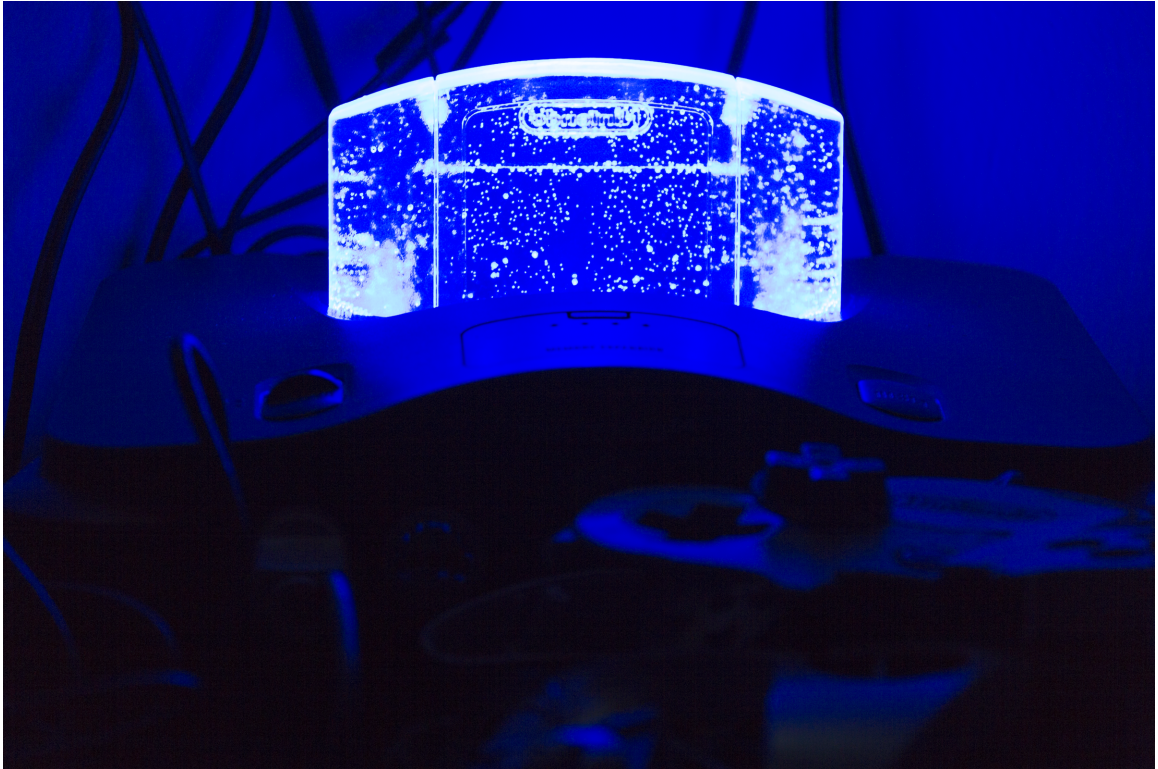
Artists using technological advancements to produce their works is not a new idea, Marclay harnesses sound through his turntables and Kusama uses LEDs in her immersive installations, and each generation of artists has their respective platform of technologies to work from.

I recognize that technology pervades my environment and it is easy to passively accept it for what it is without considering its long-term effects on our human experience. Marshall McLuhan once said, in response to a critic of his phrase “the medium is the message,” that, “there is a huge technology involved in TV which surrounds you, physically. And the effect of that huge service environment on you, personally, is vast.” (Monday 7:36)

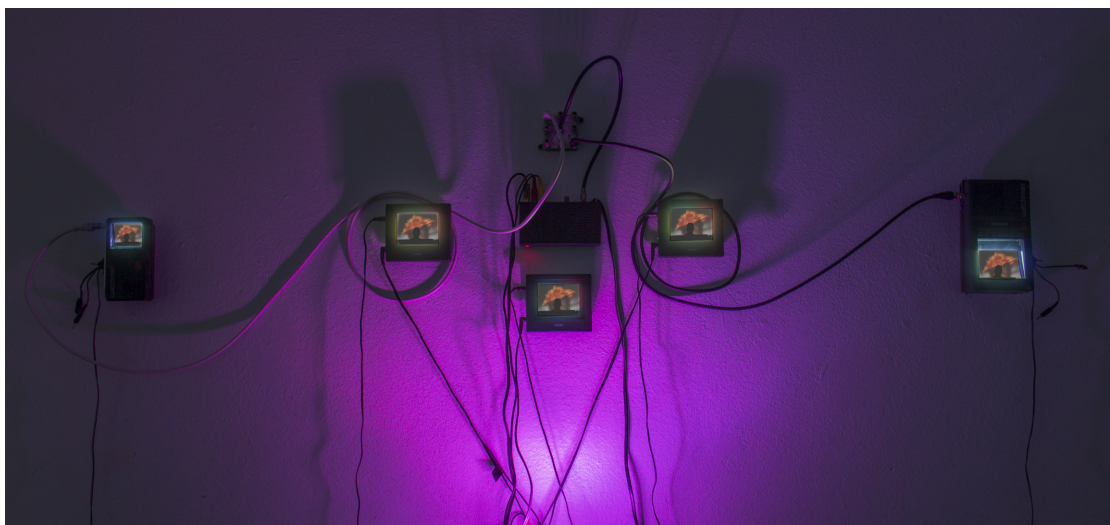
Experiencing and observing developments of telecommunications technology and mass media since the late '90s has allowed me to experience some of these effects. We carry small boxes in our pockets with unlimited potential to connect us to millions of others. Through our various screens and technology we are able to consume a near infinite amount of media and information. Artwork is the vehicle through which I hope to harness the potential of our boxes of technology so that my ideas may travel to inspire discussion and provoke thought.



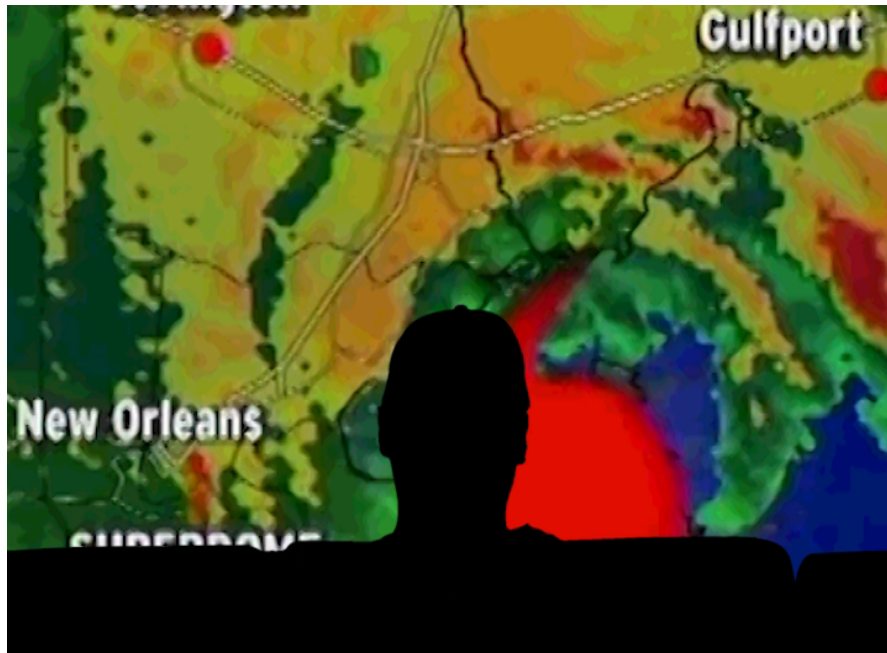
One Step Forward, Installation view, Audio/Video Sculpture



Detail of *One Step Forward*, Audio/Video Sculpture (1)



Detail of *One Step Forward*, Audio/Video Sculpture (2)



Still from *One Step Forward*, Audio/Video Sculpture (1)



Still from *One Step Forward*, Audio/Video Sculpture (2)



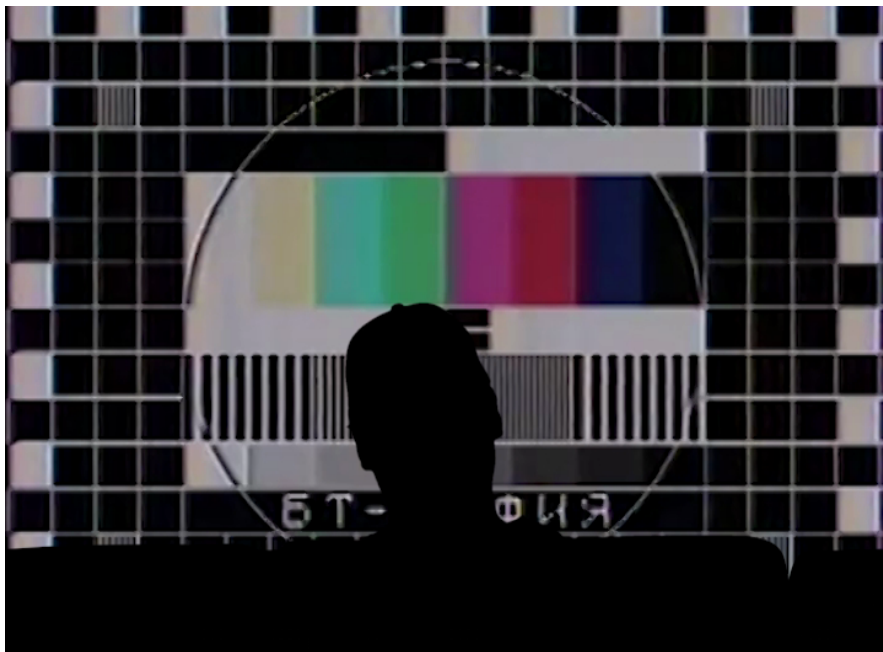
Still from *One Step Forward*, Audio/Video Sculpture (3)



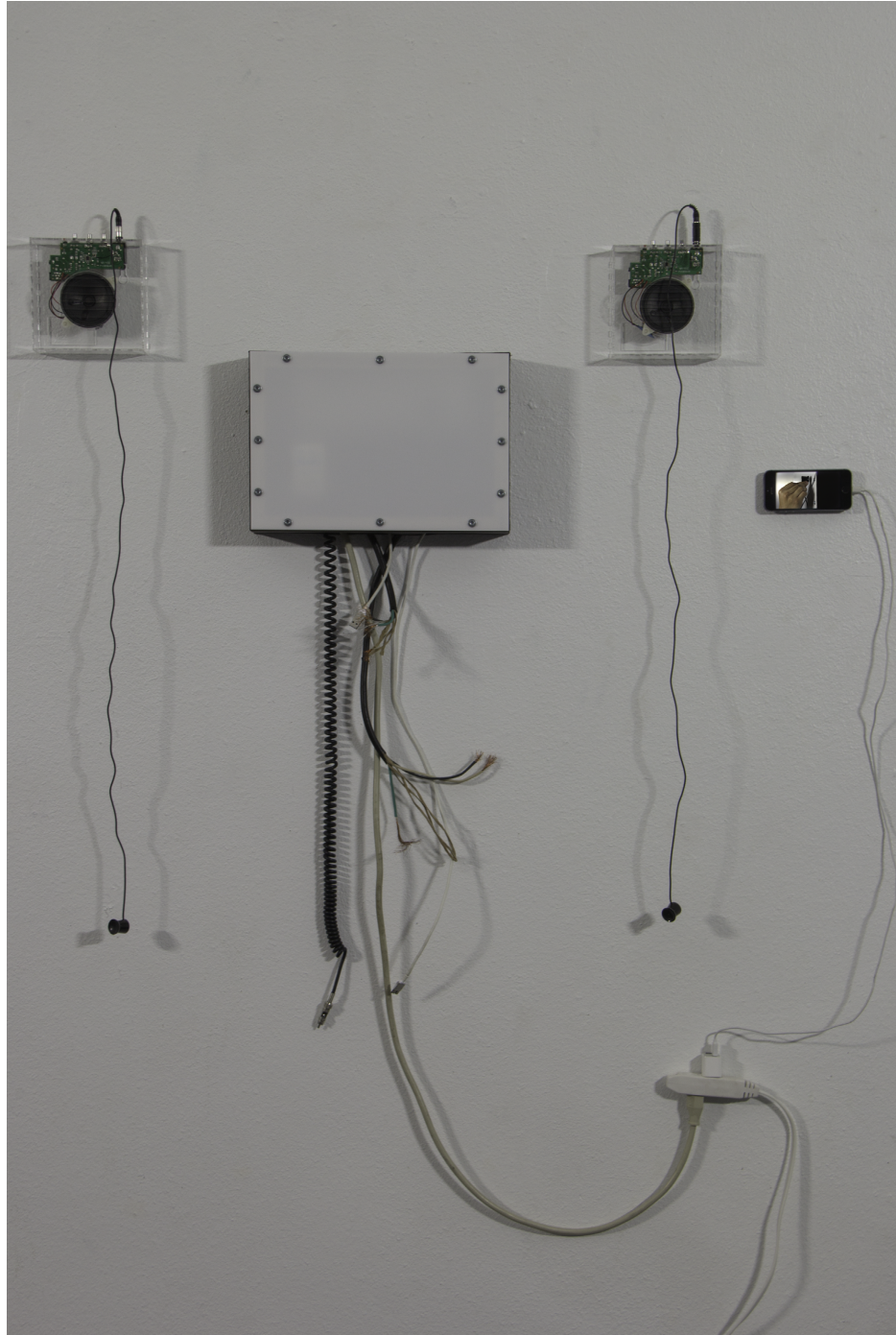
Still from *One Step Forward*, Audio/Video Sculpture (4)



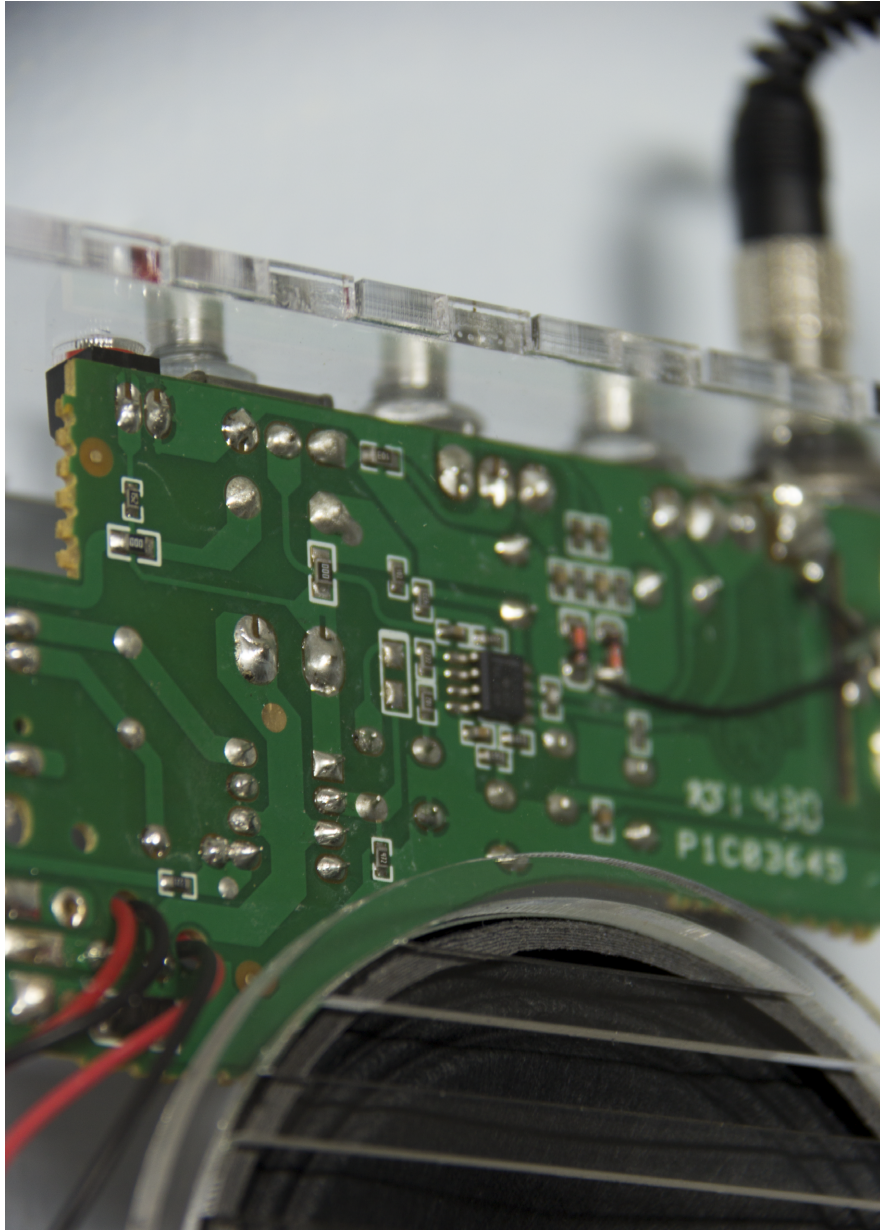
Still from *One Step Forward*, Audio/Video Sculpture (5)



Still from *One Step Forward*, Audio/Video Sculpture (6)



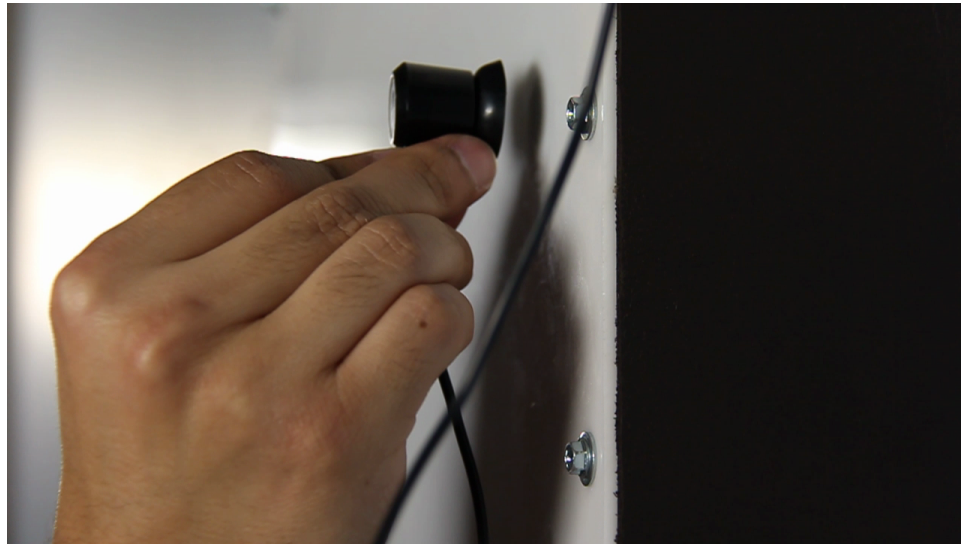
12 Volts, Installation view, Interactive Sound Sculpture (1)



Detail of Speaker Enclosure in 12 Volts



12 Volts, Installation view, Interactive Sound Sculpture (2)



Still from 12 Volts instructional video, Interactive Sound Sculpture



56Kbps³, Sound Sculpture



Window to the Soul, Installation View, Interactive Sound Sculpture



Detail of Window to the Soul, Interactive Sound Sculpture



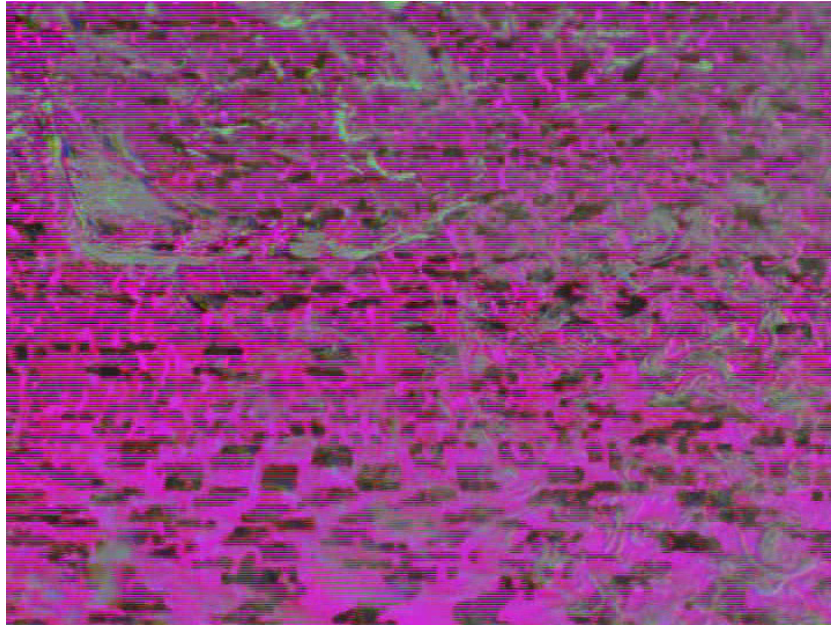
Still from Window to the Soul instructional video, Interactive Sound Sculpture



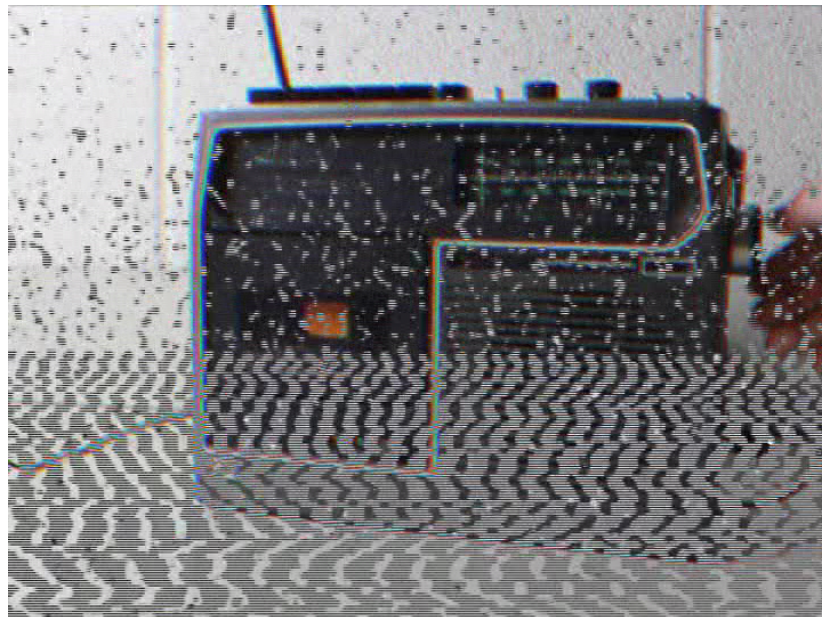
Noise in Technicolor, Installation view, Audio/Video Sculpture (1)



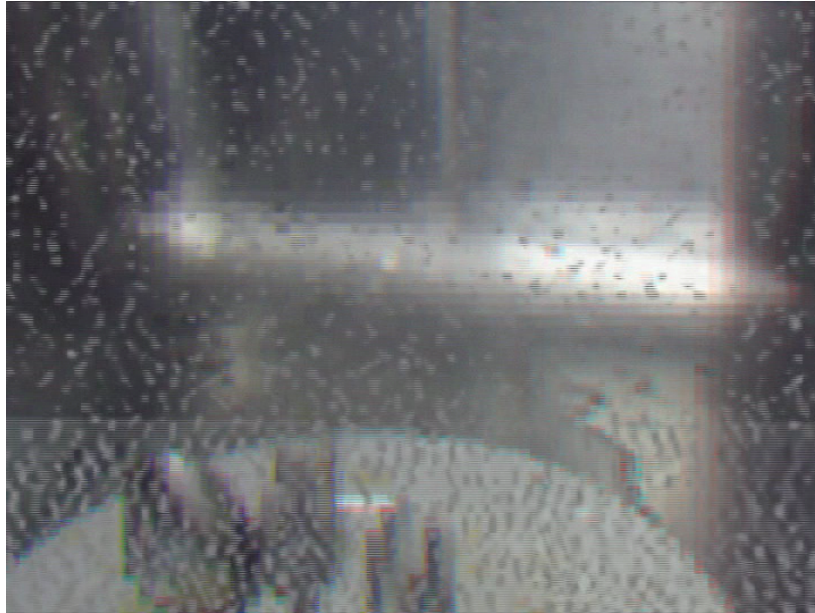
Noise in Technicolor, Installation view, Audio/Video Sculpture (2)



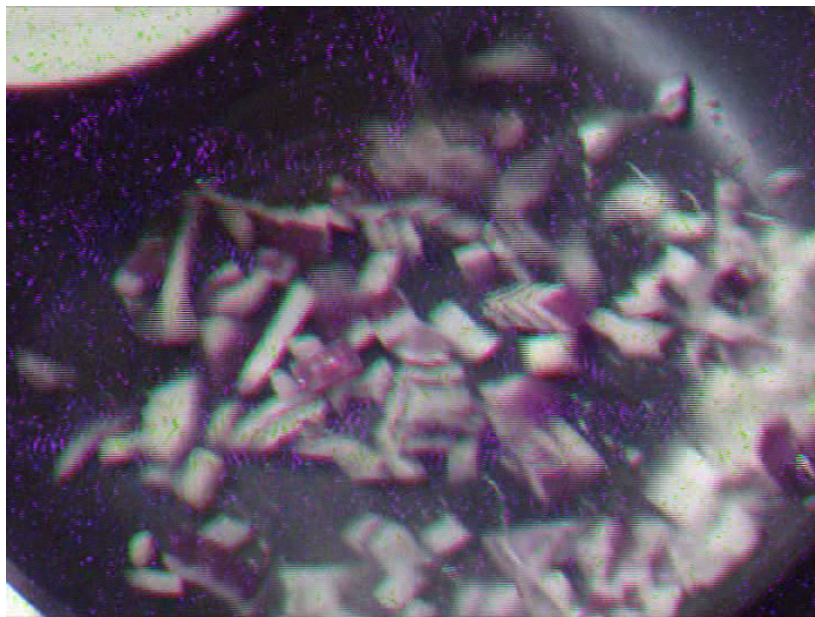
Still from *Noise in Technicolor*, Audio/Video Sculpture (1)



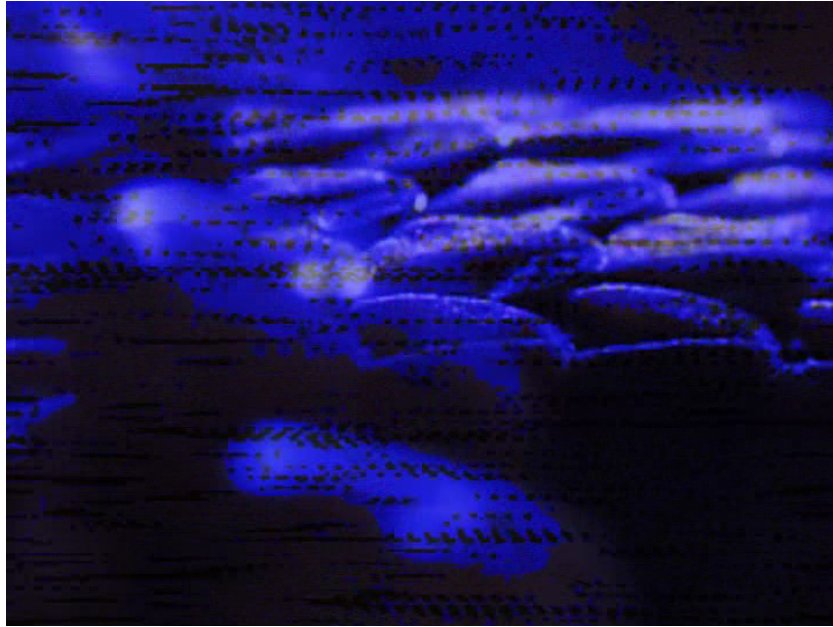
Still from *Noise in Technicolor*, Audio/Video Sculpture (2)



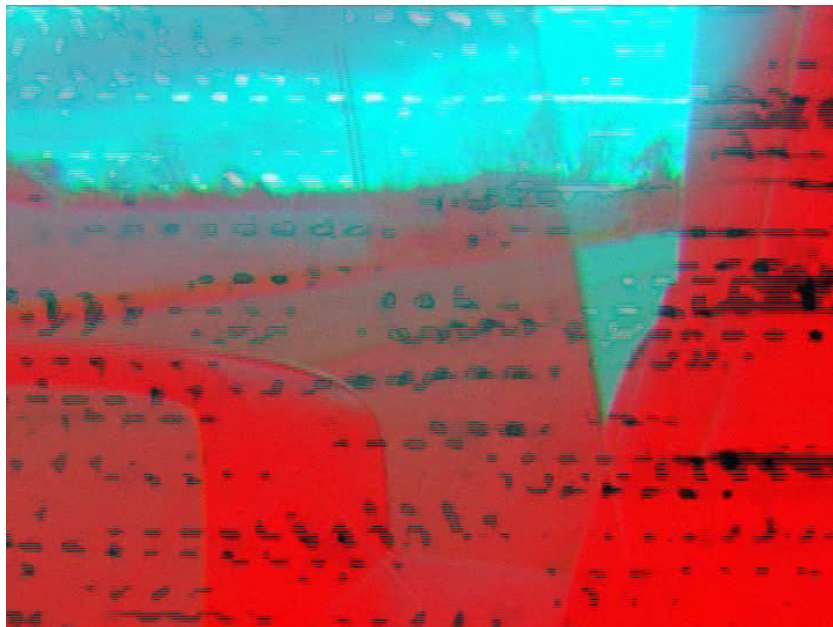
Still from *Noise in Technicolor*, Audio/Video Sculpture (3)



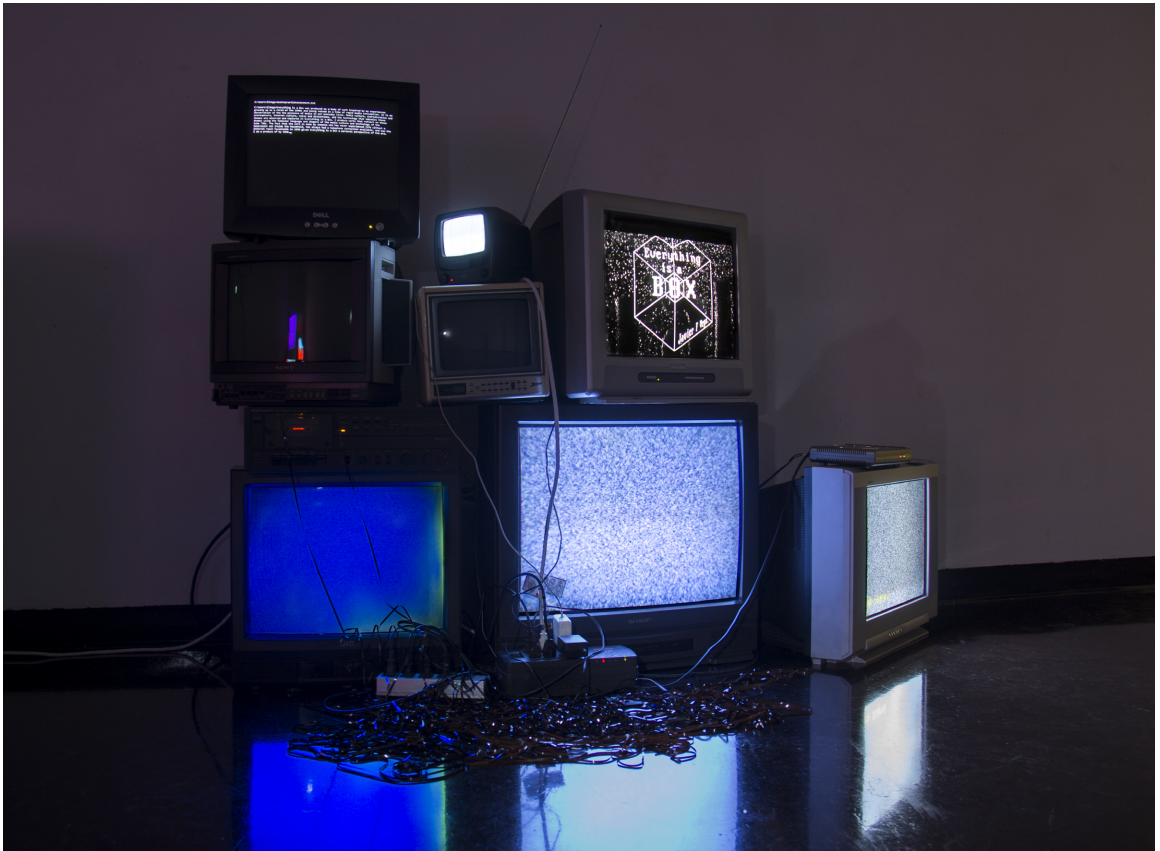
Still from *Noise in Technicolor*, Audio/Video Sculpture (4)



Still from *Noise in Technicolor*, Audio/Video Sculpture (5)



Still from *Noise in Technicolor*, Audio/Video Sculpture (6)



Artist Statement for *Everything is a Box*

BIBLIOGRAPHY

McLuhan, Marshall. *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. Signet, 1964

Monday Conference. ABC. Australia. 27 Jun. 1977. Television.

Paik, Nam June. *Nam June Paik : Video 'n' Videology 1959–1973*. Everson Museum of Art, 1997

Voegelin, Salomé. *Listening to Noise and Silence: Towards a Philosophy of Sound Art*. Bloomsbury Academic, 2010

Carter, Bruce, Mancini, Ron. *Op Amps for Everyone*. Texas Instruments. 2009

Taylor, Rachel. *Kusama and infinity*. Tate, Tate, 13 Mar. 2012, www.tate.org.uk/context-comment/blogs/kusama-and-infinity. Accessed 28 Apr. 2017.

Thelen, E., Schoner, G., Scheier, C., and Smith, L.B. *The Dynamics of Embodiment: A Field Theory of Infant Perservative Reaching*. Behavioral Sciences 24: 1-86. 2001

Witte, Robert A. *Spectrum and Network Measurements*. vol. 2nd ed, The Institution of Engineering and Technology. 2014. Electromagnetic Waves.

Downey, Allen. *Think Complexity*. O'Reilly Media. p. 79. 2012

Manovich, Lev. *Software Is the Message*. Journal of Visual Culture 13.1. 79-81. 2014

VITA

After completing his work at Nacogdoches High School, Nacogdoches, Texas, in 2008, Javier Vega entered Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas. He received the degree of Bachelor of Arts from Stephen F. Austin State University in May 2012. The following year, in September 2013, he entered Graduate School at Stephen F. Austin State University, while there he was instructor for courses in Introductory and Advanced Digital Media, and received the degree of Masters of Fine Arts in May 2017.

Permanent Address: 1821 Gasaway St
Nacogdoches, TX 75964

MLA Style Manual

This thesis was typed by Javier F. Vega